



## News Of Note...

### Easy To Stay Alert

The County of San Diego is urging residents to register their cell phones for AlertSanDiego.

"Registration only takes a couple of minutes. Once you sign up, take another minute to tell your friends and family to register. It's an easy way to make sure you and the ones you love can get emergency messages in a disaster," advises Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price.

Residents can also register VoIP phones and e-mail addresses. AlertSanDiego is different than Reverse 9-1-1 because that system only contacts listed and unlisted land-line telephones.

[www.ReadySanDiego.org](http://www.ReadySanDiego.org)  
Facebook: ReadySanDiego  
Twitter: ReadySanDiego

### Upcoming Board of Supervisors' Meetings

#### October

- 12 Board meeting and Redevelopment Agency
- 13 Land Use and Housing Authority
- 19 Board meeting
- 20 Land Use, Flood Control, Sanitation and Air Pollution Control Districts

#### November

- 9 Board meeting
- 10 Land Use

# County Names Fire Chief

## Howard Windsor Brings Experience To Leadership Post

Fire protection in San Diego County took a significant step forward when the Board of Supervisors appointed highly respected CAL FIRE San Diego Chief Howard Windsor to be the new Fire Chief of the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority.

The authority, which oversees firefighting operations for the region's back country, is part of the consolidated effort to improve efficiency and manpower when responding to a wildfire.

"I welcome Chief Windsor to his new role and I look forward to working with him to continue the



The County of San Diego is in better position today to fight a wildland fire, such as the one that occurred in 2007 that destroyed this home in Rancho Bernardo.

improvements made in this region's firefighting capabilities," says Chairwoman Slater-Price. "As the county develops the Fire Authority, we keep a close

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## Together We Will Fight Wildfires...

*This guest commentary by Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price and Fire Chief Howard Windsor was originally published Sept. 23 in the San Diego Union-Tribune (UT).*

We can all agree that we must do more to keep our communities safe from fire. Recent newspaper articles and radio interviews have made that point. But what hasn't been discussed as much as it should be are the many ways to fight fire.

While the region must maintain a ready and well-trained firefighting force, a fleet of aircraft and firetrucks, and an advance warning system, a one-faceted approach does not work. This is especially true as it relates to the wildland urban interface and the entire region's overall disaster preparedness. History has shown that it takes a systematic and balanced approach to successfully fight fires.

It takes a commitment to public education, fire safety councils and fire prevention activities such as defensible space inspections and code development and enforcement to provide for engineering solutions to the overall challenges faced where wild lands meet urban areas.

This means that the region must address the fuel load levels that inevitably build as fire is essentially removed as an environmental process. In short, we have dead,

Follow this story on the back page under "Fire Season"



Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price addresses the issue of mental illness and the services available to residents. "It is shocking that we have so many people suffering from mental illness here in San Diego County, when statistics show that 80 percent of those who seek treatment early have a chance of leading a very productive life," explained Chairwoman Slater-Price in introducing the "It's Up to Us" prevention and education campaign. The goal is to encourage people to talk openly about mental illness and to seek help because recovery is possible. It is estimated that self-stigma keeps upwards of 60 percent of individuals with mental health challenges from getting treatment.



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Newsletter



Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (right) addresses teens and parents at San Dieguito Academy in Encinitas on the dangers of teen drinking and driving. Kicking off the new county program are Chairwoman Slater-Price (left), with Sheriff Bill Gore and county Health and Human Services Director Nick Macchione.



In front of an audience with 130 San Dieguito Academy students and parents participating in a county-sponsored driver's education course, Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price, Sheriff Bill Gore and Health & Human Services Director Nick Macchione launched an initiative to reduce deaths and injuries caused by teen drinking and driving. The initiative's focus is educating young drivers and their parents, promoting responsible driving behavior, and publicizing the dangers associated with underage drinking and driving.

"Almost one year ago we lost a Torrey Pines High School student to teen drinking and driving. This really hit home. We need to boost our efforts to prevent more of these tragedies from occurring," said Chairwoman Slater-Price. "We will aggressively put the county's weight behind this

initiative and strive to be a part of the solution."

A major component to the initiative involves sheriff's deputies conducting "Start Smart" driver's education courses countywide - free for teens and parents. The county will also work closely with high schools to raise awareness to the dangers of unsafe driving during key dates, such as Prom Night and Spring Break, and evaluating existing policies and grant funding sources geared towards alcohol consumption.

"San Diego County's Report Card on Children and Families says that one-third of 11th-graders have been in a car with someone who has been drinking," said Nick Macchione. "What's even more disturbing is that a greater number of teens are getting DUIs and the number of female youth DUIs is also increasing."

**AT THE COUNTY**

# Widening Plan Extends Comment Period

County residents interested in the proposed expansion of Interstate 5 between La Jolla Village Drive and Oceanside now have until Nov. 22 to have their comments addressed in the required environmental documents.

Caltrans extended the time period following requests from various public officials, including Chairwoman Slater-Price.

The 27-mile project crosses six lagoons and affects six cities. General information on the I-5 project can be obtained from Project Manager Arturo Jacobo at (619) 688-6816.

Comments can be e-mailed to [I-5\\_NCC\\_EIR\\_EIS@dot.ca.gov](mailto:I-5_NCC_EIR_EIS@dot.ca.gov).

## Flu Season Returns

Age and health status will not matter this flu season as vac-

cine will be available to everyone 6 months and older. A change this year is that people 9 years and older will only need one type of flu shot because the H1N1 vaccine is now part of the seasonal flu vaccine. However, two doses are still recommended for children 6 months to 8 years and they are to be administered four weeks apart. According to the federal health officials, more than 160 million flu doses will be available across the country. The vaccine comes in injectable and nasal forms; however, the nasal spray is recommended for healthy individuals between 2 and 49 years of age.

Locally, people can get the flu vaccine at their doctor's office or retail pharmacies. People with no insurance or medical provider can get the flu vaccine at the county's seven public health vaccination clinics.

The nearest location can be found at [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org) or by calling 2-1-1.

## Board Rejects Pot Measure

Remaining firm in their commitment to a drug-free community, the Board of Supervisors voted to oppose Proposition 19 on the November ballot.

Prop. 19 proposes making recreational use of marijuana legal, and allowing cities and counties to tax and regulate the sale of the drug for commercial use.

## October Wetland Cleanups

By donating a few hours in October, residents can help restore one of San Diego County's most important wetlands, the Tijuana River Valley estuary while protecting the ocean.

People should contact WiLD-COAST at (619) 423-8665, ext. 211, or at [www.wildcoast.net](http://www.wildcoast.net), to find out how to volunteer and exact locations.







Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (middle, above) joins Encinitas, county library staff and volunteers to turn the ceremonial spade marking the expansion of the Cardiff-by-the-Sea Library. Chairwoman Slater-Price shows her original library card (below).

## Long-Awaited Expansion Begins On Cardiff-by-the-Sea Library

Construction is under way on the \$1.28 million expansion of the Cardiff-by-the-Sea Branch Library, following the ceremonial groundbreaking attended by Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price of the Board of Supervisors and other local dignitaries. The library is in the City of Encinitas but is part of the county branch system.

Chairwoman Slater-Price - an ardent and longtime supporter of community libraries - directed funding to the project and has spearheaded it from Day One. She was joined by county library Director Jose Aponte and Susan Hays of the Friends of the Cardiff-by-the-Sea Library.

"For as long as I remember, the Cardiff Library has been blessed with an active, vibrant group of volunteers who give this branch its identity," says Chairwoman Slater-Price. "It is a privilege to work with them on the successful expansion of the Cardiff Library."

The project will expand the Cardiff Library's children's area, the community room, and add a 659-square-foot exterior deck. The library will be expanded from 5,997 square-feet to 6,884 square feet, an increase of 15 percent.

The library will be open with modified hours during construction, which is expected to be completed next March. Hours will be noon to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and noon to 6 p.m. Fridays, and 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays.



Chairwoman Slater-Price signs the guest book (left). Addressing the audience, she saluted the community spirit that is a hallmark of the Cardiff Library.



Children from Cardiff School attended the ceremony and had their picture taken with Chairwoman Slater-Price.



"The Cardiff Library has been blessed with an active group of volunteers who give this branch its identity."

- Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price

FYI

Cardiff Library  
2081 Newcastle Ave.  
Cardiff-by-the-Sea  
(760) 753-4027

Friends of the  
Cardiff Library  
www.friends  
cardifflibrary.org  
(760) 635-1000

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San Diego County  
Library System  
www.sdccl.org



# Fire Season ...

dying and diseased trees ready to burn. Grasslands that grew with the heavy rain are now drying out.

As proud as we are of our firefighters, they need your help. Firefighters need the public to clear brush from their property. Unfortunately, the environmental pendulum has swung back to the side of no clearing outside the 100-foot defensible space zone. Clearly, pardon the pun, this is not in anyone's best interest.

In the end, we will all lose by taking this approach, and fire could win. Yet this is exactly where the Chaparral Institute and other similar groups have taken the fight. The county, the state and others are trying to comply with state and federal laws, but these are not processes that move quickly. Property owners cannot wait two or three years to clear brush when dangerous conditions exist today. The overall heat release that comes with the fuel load problems we face in many if not all areas of the state is high.

We believe we need to pull the environmental agencies together to come to a reasonable solution. We believe we must develop and expand upon the existing memorandum of understanding so we can deal with critical burn areas before it is too late.

We believe that together we can arrive at various treatment options, up to and including prescribed burns. Areas in and around life and property should be addressed first. We strongly believe in meeting quickly and getting the job done.

More fire engines, air resources and well-



Improved coordination and communication, better training and better equipment are three reasons why San Diego County is better prepared to face wildfires this season.

trained personnel are always nice to have. County government and other local governments are buying the equipment needed. The county Board of Supervisors has reasonably invested in the foundations of the system, and not in just one element of firefighting as if it were the magic pill.

As a result, the region's firefighting capability is much stronger now than five years ago. Firefighters have put down several recent fires. We have had little to no losses since the 2007 fires.

But we also know that money cannot solve every problem. When it comes to disastrous mega-fires, our greatest tool is public education. Citizens must realize their roles and responsibilities.

Some critics believe only a blank check can solve our fire problem. Yet fire losses still occur because there are times when fire conditions exceed all reasonable capabilities. To be blunt, you could put the entire New York City Fire Department in front an enormous wildfire and the wildfire would still win.

So far this year, Cal Fire has completed more than 9,700 defensible space inspections in San Diego County. These inspec-

tions are a valuable part of a systematic approach to wiping out fuel load. Those who live in the backcountry and on its border must be a part of the solution. This also will make the environment safer for the first responders to perform their duties.

Firefighters need your help in order to protect you. Your life could very well depend on it.

## Windsor ...

eye on one critical issue – how can we best save lives and property.”

In the wake of the 2003 and 2007 wildfires, the Board of Supervisors commissioned a Fire Deployment Study to see how the region could better respond to wildfires driven by strong Santa Ana winds. The fires started in the back country and were blown westward into the more populated communities, resulting in the loss of hundreds of homes in Scripps Ranch, Escondido and Rancho Bernardo.

That study recommended streamlining the various rural volunteer fire departments into one cohesive operation. The County of San Diego allocated an additional \$5 million this budget year to meet the study's recommendations, which included adding fire engines, increasing the number of stations, and readjusting staffing. (See sidebar.) The county annual spends about \$15.5 million on firefighting.

**The \$5 million allocation by the Board of Supervisors for upgrading the county's firefighting capacity will be used for:**

- **\$3.85 million – improving facilities at volunteer and fire protection districts to include bays for vehicles.**
- **\$1.31 million – regional and satellite training facilities proposed for Warner Springs, El Cajon and Pine Valley-Lake Morena.**
- **\$200,000 – day-to-day firefighting equipment.**
- **\$100,000 – mapping technology.**